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of owners. The Hebrew extracts at the end offer some unpublished matter. The indices are usefully arranged, viz., authors, titles and anonymous works, copyists, owners and witnesses, and finally geographical names, and one censor. Signor Sacerdote has also in preparation the catalogue of the Hebrew MSS. preserved in the *Casanatense* in Rome. Thus there will be another lacuna filled up as far as concerns the description of Hebrew manuscripts.

*La Littérature des Pauvres dans la Bible.* Par ISIDORE LOEB.  
Préface de THÉODORE REINACH (Cerf, Paris, 1892),

THE French proverb "les extrêmes se touchent" cannot be better applied than to the new school of Biblical investigation, represented by the late Ernest Havet in his book *La Modernité des Prophètes*, and M. Maurice Vernes in his *Précis d'Histoire Juive depuis les origines jusqu'à l'époque persane*, where both, although knowing scarcely the Hebrew alphabet, came to the conclusion that the Biblical literature sprang up as late as 250 B.C. Criticism is naturally out of question when a whole literature is judged by translations. Our lamented friend, Isidore Loeb, who was an excellent Hebrew scholar, adhered to the ideas of the above-mentioned professors, with the Hebrew text in hand. The greater part of the essays in M. Loeb's posthumous book have appeared in the *Revue des Etudes Juives*, and they reappear now, together with many additions and corrections, but unfortunately unfinished. The first essay, which is the most important, both in size and matter, treats of the Psalms. Adopting the idea of the lamented Professor Graetz, propounded in 1869 (in his *Monatsschrift*), and later on in his genial commentary on the Psalms, to the effect that a class of poor had much to do with the composition of many Psalms, a view now pretty generally accepted by biblical commentators, M. Loeb enlarged this theory by attributing all the Psalms to a class of poor, who are also called חסידים, צדיקים, יראי אל, and many other epithets of the kind. They were addressed to the rich, who are also indifferently styled רשעים, לצים, אויב, and many other epithets; in a word, the oppressed speak against the oppressors. And that is not only the tendency of the Psalms, but also that of the so-called Second Isaiah, who, in fact, was the precursor of this idea in his prophecies. Consequently the composition of Psalms could not have taken place before the exile. Indeed, M. Loeb does not admit the composition even of a single Psalm before the exile. He says: "...ils (the Psalms) sont comme d'une seule coulée et que le même souffle les anime du commencement à la fin." Even the Psalms which stand at the

end of the collection, and which have for object more the glorification of God, the description of nature, and the glorious picture of Jerusalem and the Temple than the relation of the poor to the rich, are, according to M. Loeb, of the same origin as the previous Psalms. Anyhow, he adds, no one doubts that these Psalms were composed after the Exile. M. Loeb resumes his idea as follows :—" En somme et en gros, du commencement à la fin des Psaumes, ce sont toujours les mêmes idées, les mêmes sentiments, les mêmes images qui reviennent et se répètent perpétuellement. Pour un lecteur superficiel, le livre en est monotone, mais cette monotonie même est une preuve de son unité." M. Loeb does not admit a single historical actuality in the Psalms ; the object of all of them is the fight of the poor against the rich, and the protection of God for the oppressed. As to those scholars who try to find dates for the composition of Psalms by some historical allusions, M. Loeb says of them as follows :—" Pour ces différentes raisons, l'effort respectable en soi qui font les exégèses pour classer les Psaumes par époques, identifier les faits contemporains auxquels ils se rapporteraient, découvrir leurs auteurs, nous paraît absolument illusoire et presque enfantin. Il n'y a qu'une histoire pour les Psaumes, c'est l'histoire de l'âme juive à l'époque du second Temple, c'est une histoire tout intérieure et morale où ne retentissent que de loin les événements du dehors." Our author assigns the date of the compositions of the Psalms between 589 and 167, for the following reasons ;—1st. Jerusalem is known in them as the only centre of worship ; 2nd. There is no question in the Psalms of the immortality of the soul, for the belief in a *Sheol* is quite different from the immortality of the soul ; consequently, if some Psalms had been written in the time of the Maccabees, the Pharisaic belief in the immortality of the soul would have entered into them. This last argument seems to us not based on firm ground, and in fact M. Loeb makes, later on, some reserves to it. He says : " Nous ne voulons pas dire, par ce qui précède, que nous soyons certain, qu'il y a eu des Psaumes déjà rédigés du temps de l'exil ou immédiatement après l'exil et que la production des Psaumes ait duré tout à fait jusqu'à l'avènement des Macchabées. Nous ne voudrions même pas dire, d'une manière absolue, à cause de cette question de l'immortalité de l'âme, qu'aucun de nos Psaumes n'ait été rédigé après l'événement des Macchabées, car enfin on pouvait en faire sans mettre justement cette question sur le tapis. . . . Le point à retenir est que les Psaumes, en gros, se placent entre ces deux époques, le reste est sans importance." M. Loeb also adduces the argument of philology for his dates of the composition of the Psalms, for which he refers to Professor Giesebrecht's article on the subject. For our part we believe that philology does not prove the late epoch of the com-

position of the Psalms throughout the book. Many of the Psalms in the first book are written in a very pure Hebrew. As to the poor or pious, it is certain that he is the prominent subject in a greater part of the Psalms, but not in all; as for instance in Psalms i. to viii. the oppressed is not mentioned, and for other Psalms M. Loeb is indeed obliged to admit not less than 79 various expressions (No. 11) for the poor and not less than 112 for the opposite party (No. 14)! Is it admissible that a special body of authors, which produced in the course of four centuries such a literature as the Psalms, should not be mentioned by Josephus, who likes to speak of everything which happened in the community? Neither the Chronicler, nor Daniel, nor Sirach, nor the early Rabbis make any allusion to such a literary society, contemporaneous with the former, and fresh in the minds of the latter. Indeed the first humble or poor was Moses (Numbers xii. 3), and he is offended by his sister, calumniated by Korah; why does the literature of the poor not begin with him? Are not the Apocryphal Psalms of Solomon an imitation of those of David, in which certain traces of historical facts are found? We have no theory to propose as to the method and aim in the composition of the Psalms, but certain it is that there are many allusions to other facts besides the behaviour of the rich towards the poor. And this idea runs, according to our lamented friend, through the Second Isaiah, Job, and the poetical texts inserted in the prose portions of the Old Testament, which in the opinion of M. Loeb are all post-exilic, not even excepting the song of Deborah. According to some notes left by M. Loeb unfinished and only in skeleton form, as the writer of the able preface, M. Théodore Reinach, informs us, it would seem that M. Loeb, like MM. Havet and Vernes did not believe in the existence of a First Isaiah. Was then the Jewish nation asleep before the exile, when all the surrounding nations were writing and glorifying their victories in inscriptions? But in spite of not being able to accept our deceased friend's idea as to the composition of Scripture, we may recommend his posthumous work for perusal, as it is full of happy emendations in the Hebrew text. The concordance of Biblical expressions for certain ideas, such as concerning the poor and the rich, the social state of the Jews, the nations and the Jews, on nature, on the divinity, on cult, justice, etc., will be found useful. The two appendices to the Psalms are quite worth reading: the one on the composition of the eighteen blessings (יָצָא), which we believe M. Loeb is right in deriving from the Psalms; the second treats of the life of the metaphors in the Bible, a subject which was very ably treated in this *QUARTERLY* (III., pp. 623—681), by Mr. C. G. Montefiore. Very interesting is the passage in which Biblical metaphors are compared with those used in the New

**Testament.** Let us not forget to draw attention to the well written preface by M. Théodore Reinach, in which M. Loeb's system is lucidly condensed, with some allusions to Greek writers, such as Theophrastes, who says that the Jews are a nation of philosophers, who pass their time in discussing heavenly matters. His last sentence is touching, when he exclaims: "Pourquoi faut-il que ce beau livre, qui inaugure peut-être une nouvelle phase dans l'histoire des études bibliques, soit en même temps le testament littéraire de son auteur?"

A. N.